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Archival Sources on the History of Relationship of Power and Society in the Field of Protection of Nature in Russia: 1917-1991

Abstract

The article reviews a complex of archival sources on the history of relations of power and society in the nature preservation sphere in the Soviet era. Evolution of the relationship is a subject of ecological history, a research area closely connected with history of mankind and much influenced by global and local natural elements. In the Russian scholarship, studying relations between authorities and public nature protection movement dates back to 1990s, but within the confines of national regions (i.e., the Upper and the Lower Volga regions) the issue remains virtually unstudied. The main source is archival documents on various aspects of

Russian ecological history. The author has identified relevant fonds with documents on protection of nature in two federal and eleven regional archives. She has analyzed the sources on the changing relations of power and society in the sphere of nature protection from 1917 to 1991. Of greatest information value are fonds of the Russian State Archive of Economy, the All-Russian Society of Nature Preservation, the State Archive of the Russian Federation and some regional archives. Archival documents have been distorted by censorship to a lesser degree than other sources and describe events and processes in Soviet era nature preservation more or less objectively, be it nationwide or at regional level. Their introduction into scientific use might promote further development of ecological history, which is still a new scientific discipline.

Keywords

Historical sources, archival documents, power and society, nature preservation, natural resource management, ecological history, Upper and Lower Volga region.

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